



MEMORANDUM TO THE MINISTER

THE ETA EXPANSION PROGRAM

FOR INFORMATION

SUMMARY

- processing times by allowing eligible automated eTA instead of manual vis

N/R

The program also improves application processing times by allowing eligible travellers to apply for a light-touch, largely automated eTA instead of manual visa screening when travelling to Canada by air.

BACKGROUND:

- In 2015, Canada introduced the eTA, a digital, low-cost and light-touch screening tool for visa-exempt foreign nationals flying to or through Canada. In May 2017, the eTA Expansion program was introduced to allow low-risk travellers from select visa-required countries to apply for an eTA instead of a visa when travelling to Canada by air, also known as a “partial” visa lift. Individuals are eligible if they have held a Canadian temporary resident visa (TRV) in the past 10 years, or hold a valid United States (U.S.) visitor visa at the time of application. This move represented a transformational first step away from nationality-based visitor screening toward an individualized model.
 - Currently, only Brazil participates in eTA Expansion. Results from a three-year review (2017-2020) indicate that the program successfully facilitated and incentivized low-risk travel. Over

three years, the program did not generate significant public safety concerns¹, Brazilian travel to Canada increased by 39% (compared to a 4% increase in the year before eTA Expansion was introduced), and TRV application volumes in Sao Paulo decreased by 57%, freeing up mission staff to focus on higher-risk cases, outreach, and promotion.

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N/R

- The eTA Expansion program's client-friendly and fully digital application process reduces visa processing caseloads and makes it faster, easier, and less costly for visitors to come to Canada. This aligns with Canada's commitments to reduce application processing times and improve service delivery by preserving officer-based screening for applications that are more complex or higher risk.

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CURRENT STATUS:

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¹ Immigration violation and asylum claim rates from eTA Expansion clients were minimal, and consistent with global eTA averages.

PROTECTED B

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CONSULTATIONS:

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COMMUNICATIONS IMPLICATIONS:

- While a high profile communications approach is recommended for the roll out of eTA Expansion, communications support is not required for the assessment phase of the project.

NEXT STEPS:

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a/DM e-approved July 7, 2022
Caroline Xavier
Acting Deputy Minister

Annex: eTA Expansion

PROTECTED B

ANNEX A

ELECTRONIC TRAVEL AUTHORIZATION (eTA) EXPANSION:

Background:



**Pages 5 to / à 7
are withheld pursuant to sections
sont retenues en vertu des articles**

21(1)(a), 21(1)(b)

**of the Access to Information Act
de la Loi sur l'accès à l'information**